Wages and security of women workers in Beedi and Handicraft sectors

2402. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether wages paid to women workers in various fields are very low;

(b) if so, the reasons for discrepancies; and

(c) the steps proposed for equitable wages and security of women workers exploited in beedi and handicraft sectors?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (c) Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for fixation/revision of minimum rate of wages by the State and Central Governments in the scheduled employments falling under their respective jurisdictions. Local conditions and other factors influencing the wage rates are taken into account by the appropriate Governments while fixing/revising the minimum wages. The Act does not make any distinctions on the basis of sex.

The Equal remuneration Act, 1976 which extends to the whole of India, provides for equal remuneration to women for the same work or work of a similar nature. Under the Act, the officers of the "appropriate Government" notified as Inspectors make inspections and prosecute those founds violating the provisions of the Acts. The Central Government constantly monitors the implementation of the Act. In both the above Acts, the Central Government is the appropriate Government in relation to any employment carried on by or under the authority of the Central Government or a railway administration, in relation to a banking company, a mine, oilfield or major port nor any corporation estabKshed by or under a Central Act. In relation to any other employments, the State Governments are the appropriate Governments.

Considering the special problems of the women workers and in order to pre-empt their exploitation in various employments including beedi industry and handicraft sector, several laws have been enacted by the Government, such as the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, the Plantation Labour Act, 1951, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, the Inter State Migrant Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, the Building and Other Construction (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1966, etc.

Unemployment in Tamil Nadu

2403. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of unemployed in Tamil Nadu as on October, 1998;

(b) whether there is any migration of people in Tamil Nadu on account of unemployment; and

(c) whether Government are coordinating with the State Government to provide better employment opportunities in the State?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) As per survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) during the year 1993-94, the total number of unemployed as per Usual Principal Status (UPS) was of the order of 8.86 lakh. The figures for unemployed as on October, 1998 and the information about the migration of people in Tamil Nadu on account of unemployment is not available.

(c) Special employment programmes which are in operation to provide sup-plementary employment both to the educated and uneducated in both rural and urban areas are applicable to Tamil Nadu also. These programmes include IRDP, JRY/EAS in rural areas and SJSRY in urban areas nd PMRY specifically for the educated, both in rural and urban areas